

Army standard for fire stations approved

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A standard for another Army facility type has been formally approved and the U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville's Center of Standardization will ensure standardization objectives set by the Assistant Chief of Staff for Installation Management (ACSIM) are achieved.

Huntsville Center has added Army fire stations to the fold of 15 facilities supported by developing and maintaining Building Information Models, providing design oversight and construction support to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Districts involved in construction efforts, developing military forms required for construction projects and establishing contracts.

Other standards developed by Huntsville Center include medical, correctional, sports and fitness, child and family services facilities and training ranges.

Huntsville Center's project manager Alonzo Andrews said the standardization ensures the Army gets its new facilities built with efficient contract awards, lower and predictable design costs and facility construction is completed in the shortest time period.

However, Andrews said fire stations are different because they are a top priority and ensure overall public safety requirements are met.

"Our overall goal is to meet the installation's fire fighting mission," Andrews said.

"Fire fighting capabilities on Army installations is very important and we recognize that," he said. "Our job at Huntsville Center is to ensure the process is streamlined and these facilities are built in accordance with a set standard approved by the Army."

Andrews said Huntsville Center's commitment to this crucial facility standardization is a critical element for ensuring installations meet Army expectations in the form of capabilities, capacities and process.

"Basically, we are improving the processes required to build the Army's new fire fighting facilities as quickly and effectively as possible," Andrews said.

According to Andrews, now that the standard exists, every installation with a requirement to build new fire fighting facilities has most of the work done for them. However, he said since there are different mission needs for different installations, Huntsville Center will work with the installations to meet those needs.

As the designated facility standards technical lead for Army fire stations, Huntsville Center architect Juan Pace has worked closely with the ACSIM staff, the Army Installation Management Command and the Army fire fighting community in a two-year effort to develop an Army standard for fire stations that meets the user's and proponent's functional needs, life-cycle cost goals and energy conservation requirements.

"Since fire fighting on installations is focused on different mission aspects, we have to take into account each station's concentration," Pace said.

"Some installation fire stations specialize in structural and brush fires while other fire stations focus on aircraft fires on flight lines. Other stations can fight all types of fires, so it's our job to give them the right design for their needs and ensure the facilities meet various national standards and criteria," Pace said.